



**Testimony of Carol Scully**  
**Director of Advocacy, The Arc of Connecticut, Inc.**  
**LCO No. 3942 S.B. 972 An Act Concerning Crisis Intervention Training For Police Officers**  
**And Collaboration Between Police Officers And Social Workers**

**February 23, 2023**

Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee: Co-Chair Representative Boyd, Co-Chair Senator Gaston, Vice Chair Representative DiGiovancarlo, Vice Chair Senator Osten, Ranking Member Senator Cicarella, Ranking Member Representative Howard, Representative Allie-Brennen, Representative Barry, Representative Fazzino, Representative Fishbein, Senator Fonfara, Representative Gee, Representative Genga, Representative Gonzalez, Senator Gordan, Representative Hall, Representative Hayes, Representative Linehan, Representative McGorty, Representative Paolillo, Representative Poletta, Representative Quinn, Senator Rahman, Representative Turco, Representative Vail:

The Arc Connecticut is the oldest and the largest community-based organization advocating for and with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families. We work tirelessly to uphold our vision that every individual and family living with I/DD has access to the information, advocacy, and skills they need to support their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

We are a chapter of The Arc of The United States, which has 675 chapters in 49 states and over 5,000 service locations. Nationwide, we have approximately 7,000 board members, 124,000 staff, 46,000 volunteers and collectively we serve more than 1 million people with I/DD and their family members.

In Connecticut, our 14 Arc local chapters deliver over \$100 million in jobs, supports and services to thousands of people in 162 communities. Nonprofit providers including the Arcs are the largest provider of supports and services for people with I/DD and their families in the state, providing about 96% of the services.

The Arc of Connecticut is in support of S.B. 992 to establish a training program to a training program in consultation with persons with mental and physical disabilities and advocates on behalf of such persons. We do urge the committee to also amend the language in the above sentence to say persons with mental or intellectual developmental disabilities/ developmental disabilities and physical disabilities.

Across their lifespan, people with disabilities are more likely than those without disabilities to come into contact with police either as a victim or perpetrator of a crime. This is particularly true in crisis response situations. Often interactions with first responders result in marginalization and can increase risk of violence. Publicized events across the country have raised concerns about responders' ability to appropriately respond to and de-escalate a situation involving a person with a disability, or to provide appropriate emergency medical care.

A 2016 study from the Ruderman Family Foundation estimated people with disabilities account for one-third to one-half of all people killed by law enforcement. The American Journal of Public Health published a study in 2017 finding that more than half of Black people with a disability have been

arrested by the time they turn 28. The data on violence including injury and death against people with intellectual developmental disabilities is scarce because type of disability is not identified or documented. H.B. 6719 provides an opportunity to collect data on individuals with disabilities that will be available in a searchable data base to assist both the person with a disability and the first responder. This data will also be available to dispatchers of first responders that has the potential to make a difference in the experiences a person with a disability has in interactions with first responders. In tandem with S.B. 972 this information will help inform how police and first responders interact with this vulnerable population.

Training both mandated and ongoing for new and veteran first responders and aligned with training for social workers on how to first identify then communicate, engage, de-escalate, and respond to people with intellectual developmental disabilities/developmental disabilities, autism and mental health diagnosis will go a long way in helping to understand behaviors and actions and how people with these disabilities respond in emergent situations.

The Arc of Connecticut urges the legislature to pass S.B. 972 as amended by the language underlined in paragraph five.

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